In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An arrangement for connecting a node in a distributed system containing fail-uncontrolled nodes, the arrangement comprising:

a receiver ~~means~~ for receiving signals from another node of the system, and

a node guardian ~~means~~ coupled to the receiver ~~means for~~ to controlling selectively reception according to a predetermined TDMA schedule of a message ~~signals~~ threat so as to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system.

2. (Currently Amended) The arrangement of claim 1, wherein the node guardian ~~means~~ comprises:

a switch ~~means~~ for receiving a plurality of input signals,

logic ~~means~~ coupled to the switch ~~means~~ for combining the plurality of received signals according to a predetermined logic function, and

a controller ~~means~~ coupled to the switch ~~means~~ for controlling application of the plurality of received signals to the logic ~~means~~.

3. (Original)   The arrangement of claim 2 wherein the predetermined logic function comprises an OR logic function.

4. (Currently Amended) The arrangement of claim 2, wherein the controller ~~means~~ is arranged to control the switch ~~means~~ according to ~~a~~ the predetermined TDMA schedule.

5. (Previously Presented) A distributed system comprising the arrangement according to claim 1.

6. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 5, further comprising at least one node having bus guardian ~~means~~.

7. – 9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the system is one of A-B:

     A   a TTP/C system,

     B   a FlexRay™ system.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a node in a fail-uncontrolled distributed system, the method comprising:

        providing a receiver ~~means~~ receiving signals from another node of the system, and

        providing a node guardian ~~means~~ coupled to the receiver ~~means~~ and controlling selectively according to a predetermined TDMA schedule reception of ~~signals~~ a message thereat so as to reduce reception of uncontrolled transmission from another node of the system.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the node guardian ~~means~~ comprises:

        a switch ~~means~~ receiving a plurality of input signals,

        logic ~~means~~ coupled to the switch ~~means~~ and combining the plurality of received signals according to a predetermined logic function, and

        a controller ~~means~~ coupled to the switch ~~means~~ and controlling application of the plurality of received signals to the logic ~~means~~.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein the predetermined logic function comprises an OR logic function.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~node~~ method of claim 12, wherein the controller ~~means~~ controls the switch ~~means~~ according to ~~a~~ the predetermined TDMA schedule.

15. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a distributed system comprising the method of operating a node according to claim 11.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising providing at least one node having the bus guardian means.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, comprising:

operating a first node according to claim 11,

operating a second node according to claim 11,

providing a first group of nodes having respective bus guardians means, and

providing a second group of nodes having respective bus guardians means,

wherein the first group is coupled to the first and second nodes via a first common channel, and the second group is coupled to the first and second nodes via a second common channel,

the first group and the first node forming a first error containment region, and the second group and the second node forming a second error containment region.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, the first group further being coupled to the first and second nodes via a third common channel, and the second group further being coupled to the first and second nodes via a fourth common channel.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 further comprising:

operating a third node according to claim 11, and

operating a fourth node according to claim 11,

wherein the third node is coupled to the first common channel, the fourth node is coupled to the second common channel, and the first, second, third and fourth nodes are cross-coupled,

the third node being in the first error containment region, and the fourth node being in the second error containment region.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the system is one of A-B:

      A   a TTP system,

      B   a FlexRay™ system.

21. – 24. (Canceled)